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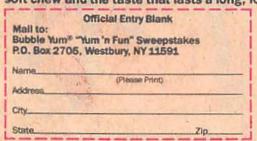


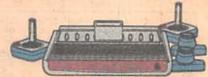
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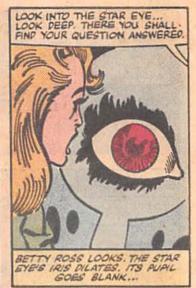








































HORRIFIED, BRUCE BANNER FALLS BACK AGAINST AN INNER POOR, UNLOCKED, IT SWINGS BASILY OPEN.





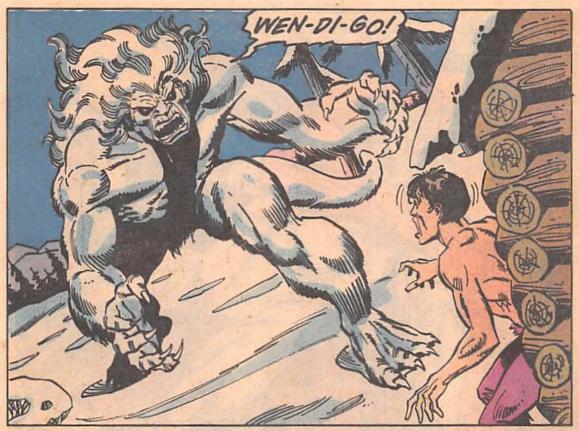






















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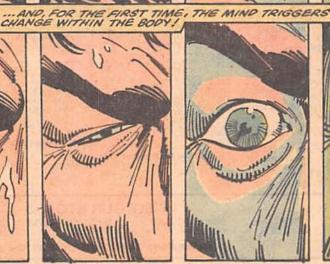














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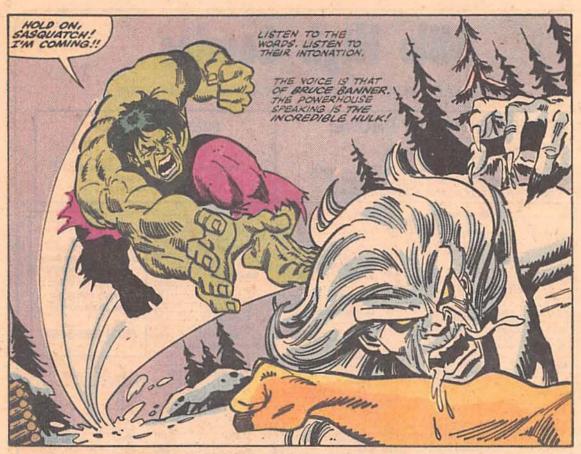
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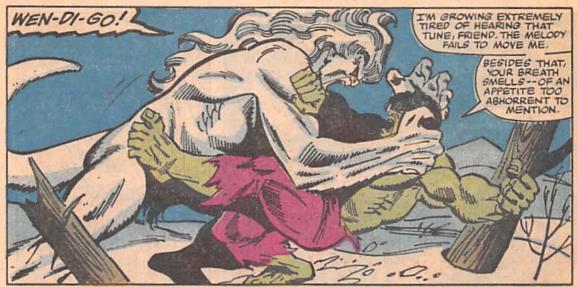
























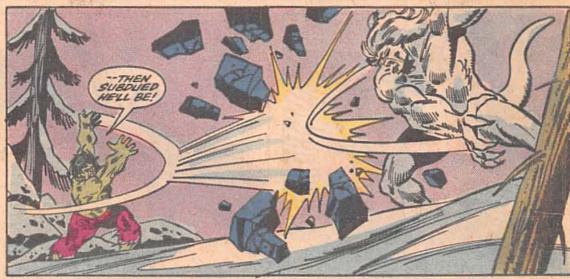
































#### BEING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF MARVEL COMICS...

....is like balancing a watermelon on your nose. It's hard to do, it can hurt a lot, and everyone thinks you're out of your mind for doing it. Symetrmes, if it weren't for the honor of it all, I think I'd give it up. Nonetheless, on with the news...

#### DOZENS FAIL TO BE KILLED!

at least to suffer severe pain. Two weeks ago, on December 9, to be exact, just before three P.M., most of the crew was gathered in the Bullipen to cut a cake in honor of Publishing Vice-President Mike Hobson's forty-fifth birthday! Succienty, without warning, a stepladder slammed into a window only a tow feet away! Glass sprayed everywhere, and star-tiod Bullpenners, imagining that it was anything from an artillery attack to the end of the world as we know it, dived for cover. Fortunately, it seems that no one was seriously injured, though our brand-new editorial assistant, Franki Sienkiewicz, who was negrest the window at the time, was battered by flying debris and shaken up. Yes, that name Sienkiewicz (pronounced Sin-keh-vitch) should sound familiar. Lovely Franki is the wife of renowned MOON KNIGHT artist Bill Sienkiewicz! Anyway, after we found out it was a stepladder that had crashed our party, speculation ran wild! Had the Dire Competition at last perfected their step-ladder-cannon? Or was it the work of a Sinester Foreign Power, trying to undermine American morals by striking at our comics creators? As it turns out, it was just the wind which blew the ladder from the top of a nearby skyscraper-under-construction, and not the work of Nefarious Energies. Nonetheless, it certainly made our party... different! I think Mike will remember this birthday.

#### PRESENTING THE FIRST ANNUAL SHOOTER AWARDSI

By now all of you have stopped accidentally def-ing your checks "1981" and are comfortably underway with A.D. 1982, but as I write this it's late De-cember 1981. As a matter of fact. I'm on an ampiane at the moment, headed home to Pithiburgh, "Some-piace Special," PA for the holidays but that's not im-portant. What's important is that I've decided to give some special no-prizes, by my authority as E.I.C honor achievements of the past year. Some will be serious, some not so, and all are absolutely arbitrary on my part. The ducisions of the judge are final. And

riow, the awards... The Award for Quistest Superster Pencillar gone

to Brent Anderson, who probably gives quiet lessons to Brent Anderson, who probably gives quiet lessons to Ninja on the side. Last time Brent said something, Deredevil was heard to say "Pardon me?"

The Award for Fastest Coloring Job goes to Christie Scheele for Avengers #216, "To Avenge the Avengers," colored in "thirty-seven-point-aught-six." seconds," according to her because it was terminally late thanks to the scripter (me). Surely, she wouldn't itb about something like that, would she? Nah.



The Award for Most Overnight Lettering Jobs ones to Joe Rosen who came through time after time because he's as dependable as the sunrise and the Hulk's temper. Fortunately for us, Joe's much more mellow and cooperative than the Hulk.

The Award for Worst Engraver's Error goes to Chemical Color for Ke-Zer # 12 'Belanco... I' in which an entire panel, a color-hold; was dropped out!

The Award for Saving Marve's Bacon Schedulewise goes to Chemical Color for saving several dozen late issues with last-ditch, blitzkrieg eparating and engraving efforts, and doing a dam

good job despite the rush.

The Award for Best Singlehanded Complete Cover Overnight goes to Editor Alien Milgrom for Hulk #267, "Wrong End of the Rainbow." He writes, he draws, he inks, he edits — next he'll be selling the comics down on the corner of 56th and Madison

The Award for Best Cover Copy goes to Jim Saiscrup for Farntastic Four #238, "The Lady Is Not For Burning." That's the stile, not the cover copy, by the way. You have to check out the prize-simpling copy for yourself to believe it.

The Award for Father of the Year, though closely contested, goes to Ron Zalme, who provided every living person within range with cut-cut-and-loid-up, do-tt-youself, scale-model, cardboard statuettes, which he designed and created, of his wife, himself and new beby Jessica.

The Award for Currrudgeon of the Year goes to staff currrudgeon (and editor, and genius) Dennis J. O'Neil — even though we all know it's just a front and

underneath he's a sweet guy.

The Award for Best Telephone Greeting goes to CRAZYI Magazine editor, Larry Hams, who answers the phone, "CRAZY! What's your excuse?"

The Award for Toughest Editor goes to Louis lones, who's a rather strong-willed and determined sort, and has a wicked left hook

The Award for Rookle of the Year goes to new-comer Tom DeFalco. Sure, I know he's been in comics, editing even, since Don Perlin wore knickers, but

he's new here...and already a star! The Award for Miss —occost I mean Mister Congeniality goes to Danny Crespi, fearless Produc-

tion manager and all around nice guy.

The Award for Comeback of the Year goes to lack Abel, who didn't let a serious stroke stop him Showing enormous courage and determination, and cheerfully goaded on by his friends, he rehabilitated his paralyzed right hand to the extent that he's inking and drawing again - even better than before. Now there is a man.

The Nuclear Terrorist Clone Honorable Mention goes to inker Bob Layton, who's a first-class artist and a first-class guy — for a radioactive mutant, that

That's all for now, but be warned! I'll probably give additional awards from time to time when the mood strikes me

#### THIS TOO, SHALL PASS

This column that is. We're out of space, it ap ars. Before I sign off, though, I want the world to know that I was just kidding about Bob Layton being a radioactive mutant. It was just a joke. Yes, I know it wasn't funny, but, hey, how humorous could you be if you were in my place? Watermelons are very heavy.

Dust Jim Shooter

#### THE HYPE BOX

This month's actra-hot items...

OHOST PADER #65 -- Look for rome way spe call finescrite in this reag from now on, as the new creative into of ROGER STEFIN, BOB SURJANSKY, and DAYE SIMONS needy goes to lown. We think they not gorns be the resot learn to really not the industry on its ear. Son for your

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- DAREDEVIL #183 The Angel Dust sags.
- G.I. JOE #1 pulpin' premiere issue! AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229
- **CAPTAIN AMERICA #270**
- THOR #320
- **MICRONAUTS #42**
- **CHOST RIDER #60**
- MOON KNIGHT #20
- **DOCTOR STRANGE #53**
- INCREDIBLE HULK #272
- AVENGERS #220 **CONAN #135** 
  - MARYEL TALES #140 -- Reprinting Amuz-
  - ing Spider-Man #3, by LEE and DITKO
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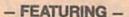
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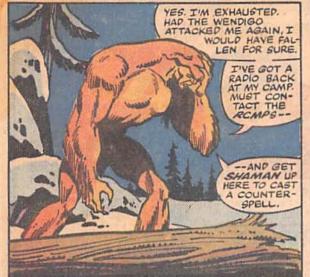
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ALLEH MILGROM AHN NOCENTI NOTICE THAT BE

Dear Editor,

So the High Evolutionary dies in THE INCREDIBLE HULK #2667

This isn't going to be another letter protesting the killing-off of an interesting and significant character. No, it's a letter stating my belief that I don't really think the High E is dead. Sure, devolving one's self into primodial slime would seem to be a pretty sure means of committing suicide, but I'm equally certain that some future Marvel writer will, in time, think up some reason to resurrect him, and labor diligently to prove that he didn't really perish. Or perhaps his clone will show up. It won't matter if the reason is believable or not, the important thing is that the writer will realize that the rule is that comic book characters seldom stay dead.

This is not as it should be.

Death is permanent, and to "resurrect" the dead not only stretches the reader's credibility, but also makes a mockery of the dramatic or emotional impact that the reader felt when the character "died." Eventually, after being taken in a few times, the reader refuses to be fooled, and thus the story is diminished.

So I guess this actually is a protest over the killing of the High Evolutionary, after all.

Sure, I'm being hard on you guys. After all, maybe you do fully intend for him to stay dead, and maybe he even will. But I doubt it. Wait and see.

T.M. Maple Toronto, Ontario Canada

Dear Bill Mantio.

Why?

What is your reason for killing off a major Marvel cornerstone character?

I thoroughly enjoyed THE INCREDIBLE HULK #265. There, you breathed new life and dimension into the Marvel Universe with your creation of the Rangers. The art of that issue was good. The story was a solid, well-paced, straightforward endeavor, with lots of good action.

Then, within the space of 30 days, THE INCREDIBLE HULK #266 comes out and plummets this mag's story qualities to depths equalled only by the insipid rape love story of Ms. Marvel in the pages of AVENGERS ANNUAL #11.

The High Evolutionary springs from the same character mold as Reed Richards. He has never been singularly goaded by ego. He is/was a pursuer of knowledge. To state that he went mad because his power paled beside that of the Beyonders (whoever they arel) is ludicrous and stupid!

I hope this is not a permanent state of affairs. I hope that you will revive the High Evolutionary, and soon. Things like this only serve to further alienate old Marvelites like myself from Marvel. Please take Larry Houston notel

1422 Rockglen Road #203 Glendale, CA 91205

Dear Bill, Sal & Al,

I purchased THE INCREDIBLE HULK #266 because it featured the High Evolutionary. I usually avoid this mag, regarding it as one of Maryel's less-creative commercial efforts exclusively for the bubble-gum brigade. Here's what I thought after reading it, how-

It was worth the 50 cents I paid for it. Part of the reason that I enjoyed it is that I didn't purchase it to record it, grade the condition, put it in a plastic bag and file it away as a "collector's item." I bought it to read

And read it I did.

It's hard to convey to you how much I appreciated this issue for its simplicity, its straightforwardness. That probably means that this letter of praise should be "deceptively simple" to write. Really, at this point I've been at it almost half an hour. Okay, one by one: nice plot, nice script, nice art, nice colors.

Nice?

Nobody writes missives about "nice."

I give up. I'll make you a deal, Bill - I'll write the next issue of THE INCREDIBLE HULK; you write letters of praise like this to me. You're looking for a challenge after killing off the High Evolutionary, aren't you?

Douglas Cooke Rochester, NY 14617

Not an insurmountable challenge such as the one you propose, Doug. But thanks for the kind words.

Dear Marvel,

The Hulk as he now stands is in good hands... but is he human. or monster?

The Hulk is said to have a simple mind, often compared to that of a child. But children are suprisingly keen sometimes. They are quick to make decisions, they can tell if they are being duped, they are alert and observant, and sometimes they say very deep and meaningful things, often without being aware of it or meaning to. Is the Hulk truly, then, like a child?

Children, like the Hulk, often have temper tantrums. Children, like the Hulk, are often confused. Children, like the Hulk, need friends. The Hulk's friends recently realized that they are not such good friends to the Hulk after all (HULK #253). It took a very thought-provoking statement from the Hulk himself to make them realize this:

"Tanks! Bombs! Planes! Hulk will fight back as Hulk always fights back! But will Hulk's friends fight beside him? NO! Hulk's friends will stay where it is safe — they will not help Hulk!

And the people who witness the Hulk's battles against bizarre villains often take the point of view that what they are seeing is a clash of monster versus monster, until the Hulk comes out with a statement like this one from the same issue:

Take a good look at elephant-man and cat-man, (Doc) Sam-

son, and remember next time you call Hulk monster!"

Children have morals. So does the Hulk. He almost never smashes out unless he has been attacked first. Children often hold onto something that they want or wish to possess, and will work for that something. The Hulk has definitely shown himself capable of that kind of sense of purpose, as when he returned Jarella to her world for burial, and more recently when he stood beside his friends in their hour of need against the Changelings. Good, let's see more of this side of the Hulk

Is the Hulk more like a child than a monster? Yes. Let's keep him that way.

Greg Hecht 13 Jennie Street Emmaus, PA 18049

Child?... don't forget there is a man inside that monster, too, as you saw by reading the issue you hold in your hands. But man, monster, or child — be here next month for... ONCE A HULK, ALWAYS A HULK!



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